

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

714/744 P Street
P.O. BOX 942732
SACRAMENTO, CA 94234-7320
(916) 657-2843



July 2, 1999

The Honorable Byron Sher
Member of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 2082
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senator Sher:

SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL (SB) 1107

I am pleased to inform you that the Department of Health Services (Department) supports SB 1107. This bill would amend existing law addressing drinking water system operators to meet recently established national standards. SB 1107 will expand existing certification requirements to include distribution operators, establish new educational, experience, and staffing requirements, require that operators take refresher courses to maintain their certification, and authorize fees to support the certification program.

Without implementation of SB 1107, California would lose the important public health protections contained in the bill such as those for implementing continuing education requirements and establishing new categories of drinking water treatment plant operators. Additionally, California would have 20 percent or approximately \$15 million of federal capitalization grant funding withheld from its State Revolving Fund loans and grants program for public water system infrastructure improvements.

The passage of SB 1107 will be critical in enabling the Department to maintain a safe drinking water supply and to provide public water systems with the funding to ensure that California's drinking water supplies are safe. It also enables the Department to continue improvements to the infrastructure related to public water systems that were begun with passage of SB 1307 (Costa, Chapter 734, Statutes of 1997). We appreciate your carrying this important piece of legislation for the Department of Health Services.

If you have any questions regarding the Department's position on SB 1107, please call me at (916) 657-2843.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Charleen M. Milburn
Deputy Director
Legislative and Governmental Affairs